

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**FIRST LADY MICHELLE OBAMA VISITS MAPLE AVENUE SCHOOL  
AND NEWARK BETH ISRAEL MEDICAL CENTER RECEIVES  
PRAISE FOR PEDIATRIC OBESITY PROGRAM**

*Newark, NJ*—When First Lady Michelle Obama stopped at Newark's Maple Avenue School on November 18, as part of the "Let's Move!" campaign against childhood obesity, Newark Beth Israel Medical Center was praised for its award-winning pediatric weight management programs.

Newark Beth Israel Medical Center (NBIMC) and Children's Hospital of New Jersey (CHoNJ) were recognized at the event by Maple Avenue School's Principal Deneen Washington for a partnership with the Medical Center called KidsFit Newark that gives students and staff access to a full-time nutritionist.

Three members of the NBIMC/CHoNJ community were invited to the event: John A. Brennan, MD, Executive Director of NBIMC and CHoNJ; and co-founders of KidsFit Newark, Barbara Mintz, MS, RD, Director of Clinical Nutrition, and Nwando Anyaoku, MD, Director of the Pediatric Health Center.

"It is an honor to be recognized by the school for our ongoing efforts to combat pediatric obesity," says John A. Brennan, MD. "Prevention is an integral part of outstanding medical care and we will continue to assist the Newark community."

KidsFit Newark, the successful pediatric wellness, weight loss and healthy lifestyle program from CHoNJ, began a first-in-the-state obesity prevention pilot program for the students and staff at Maple Avenue School in March 2010. The pilot program, funded by a grant from Merck Company Foundation, focuses on obesity prevention by providing a registered dietitian on site, after school wellness and exercise programs, and assistance with planning healthy school lunches. Lessons are developed and being taught by NBIMC's nutritionists as a part of the health and physical education curriculum. The KidsFit program engages not only the children but their parents and teachers as well in through classroom assignments and after school activities that center on the importance exercise and a healthy diet nutrition. This is only one of the components that match the

pillars of the Let's Move message. Additionally, NBI in partnership with South Ward council man Ras Baraka, Garden State Urban Farms and Shaping NJ also sponsors a weekly farmer's market. The market will be coming indoors in NBI's lobby from December through April to offer employees and the community fresh affordable produce through the winter months.

At the event, The First Lady attended a briefing on nutrition and physical education policies given by several K-8 students. Newark Mayor Cory Booker moderated the event. He was named by the First Lady to be honorary vice chairman of her Partnership for a Healthier America, the foundation that promotes her Let's Move! campaign in the private sector. Newark Beth Israel Medical Center was recently named a partner in "Let's Move."

#### About CHNJ

Children's Hospital of New Jersey, located at Newark Beth Israel Medical Center and part of the Saint Barnabas Health Care System, is the state's premier hospital caring for children, with specialized services to treat ill and injured children from newborn to adolescent years as well as preventive programs that promote wellness in the community. For a referral to a pediatrician or pediatric specialist, please call 1-888-SBHS-123. Follow us on Twitter: get real time news from the Saint Barnabas Health Care System at [www.twitter.com/saintbarnabas](http://www.twitter.com/saintbarnabas) .